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ABSTRACT

The Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) conducted a trend analysis of students from four designated groups--Aboriginal, visible minorities, persons with disabilities, and women in predominantly male occupations. These students were compared to the overall student population on four success measures: access to educational opportunities; success rates in education as measured by completion/graduation rates; success rates in obtaining employment in the chosen field of study; and wage/salary ranges for the employed graduates. The study used data from these sources: annual Education Equity Monitoring Report that documents changes from year to year in terms of applications, enrollments, graduation, and leaver statistics for the four groups and annual Graduate Employment Survey from which the graduates of the four groups are extracted and their employment rates compared with overall graduates. Findings indicated the following: an increase in participation of equity groups in SIAST programs; lower success rates for equity group students; steadily improving completion rates with parity for some groups; and lower employment rates for equity group graduates. More long term data is necessary before definite correlations can be made. (Copies of 29 transparencies used during the presentation are appended.) (YLB)

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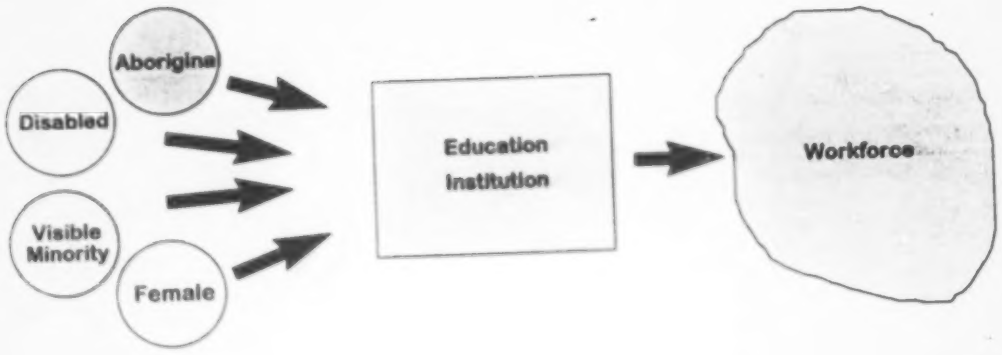
Do Equity Groups Have a Fair Chance in our Education System?



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Do Equity Groups have a Fair Chance in our Education Institutions?

An outcome assessment analysis of diversity groups students compared to students overall

Introduction

The Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology is a technical institute in the province of Saskatchewan, Canada, with four campuses in the major four cities of the province. In Saskatchewan we have a large and growing population of Aboriginals. These people often face major barriers to enter the mainstream of society. One of these barriers is lack of education. Even when such students enter an educational institution they often face many obstacles to be successful. In addition to this group, we have designated three further groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in the educational institutions and in the workforce: people with disabilities, visible minorities (or racialized Canadians) and women in pre-dominantly male occupations. Since 1990 SIAST has adopted an "Education Equity" Program that is designed to address the inequities that these four designated groups face in participating in education.

A major component of the Education Equity program is to provide access to these groups of students to our educational institution by setting aside seats for qualified applicants. However, the support does not stop at the entry point. Getting entry is of no particular value if these students can't succeed. In order to help these students complete their studies successfully, we have put in place a number of programs and special measures that would eliminate or reduce some of the barriers they face in an educational setting. The goal is to have these students graduate at similar rates and to obtain similar levels of attachment to the labor force than do the regular students. We have studied the progress with regard to this goal over time.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to conduct a trend analysis of students of the four designated groups (Aboriginal, visible minorities, persons with disabilities and women in non-traditional occupations) of these success measures compared to the overall student population:

- access to educational opportunities
- success rates in education as measured by completion/graduation rates
- success rates in obtaining employment in the chosen field of study
- wage/salary ranges for the employed graduates

Literature Review

No formal literature review was conducted for this particular study; however, before implementing the SIAST Education Equity program and in the context of our regular research functions, we found a significant amount of secondary research, which documented the need for our Education Equity program, the numerous barriers to education and to enter the workforce.

Data Sources

At SIAST we complete an annual Education Equity Monitoring Report since 1990. This report documents the changes from year to year in terms of applications, enrollments, graduation and leaver statistics for the four identified equity groups compared to the SIAST student population overall. The report documents the various special measures that have been put into place during that year to increase the chances of succeeding in the program.

SIAST also conducts an annual Graduate Employment Survey of our over 4,000 graduates. In a further analysis of this overall data base we extract the graduates of the four equity groups and compare the employment rates of the equity group graduates to the overall graduates. This type of analysis has now been performed for six years and it provides us with a good data for the trend analysis.

Methodology

Data is analyzed on a yearly basis in a consistent manor. The proportion of students of the equity groups in the pool of applicants, enrolled students, graduates and leavers are compared. Similar proportions would indicate that equity students face similar challenges and barriers as do the students overall in progressing through their studies. Application to enrollment ratios are compared as are graduation and leaver rates.

Conducting a course analysis for every program allows us to identify programs in which these students experience particular difficulty. The analysis is based on calculating the percentages of credit courses attempted, completed, failed and exited and comparing this by the various groups.
Employment rates in training related employment, full and part time employment, wage and salary levels and other related information are tracked and compared through the data bases of the annual Graduate Employment Survey.

Results

We have noted an increase in participation of equity groups in the programs offered at SIAST since the Education Equity program has been adopted. Success rates are still lower for equity group students than for the overall student population, however, the completion rates are steadily improving and reaching parity for some groups.

Employment rates for graduates from equity groups are generally lower than for the overall graduates. The gap has narrowed somewhat, but the differential seems to be related to economic upswings. More long term data is necessary before we can make any definite correlation's however.

Implications

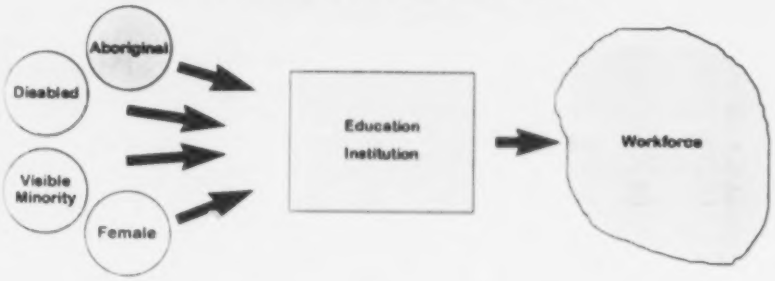
The results of the study are useful in modifying the special measures that assist students to complete their studies. These measures can then be applied in a very targeted manner to assist special groups or to approach the barriers in specific programs. Although the institution as a whole does not have the ultimate control over who hires our students, we can indirectly affect potential employers by encouraging them to hire graduates from the equity groups by assuring the industry that all graduates, regardless from what special group, have mastered the same competencies and are equally qualified to do the work that is expected of them.

SLIDE 1

Do Equity Groups Have a Fair Chance in our Education System?

A comparison of Aboriginal, Disabled, Visible Minority and Female students to the overall student body with respect to

- **Access to education**
- **Graduation rates**
- **Workforce attachment rates**



SLIDE 2

Access

SIAST established an Education Equity Program

Outcomes

Annual Monitoring Report prepared for the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission

but...

... where do we go from there?

Attachment to Workforce

Measured by the annual SIAST Graduate Employment Statistics Report

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SLIDE 3

SIAST Education Equity Program

Objective

- **To ensure a SIAST student body which reflects the diverse mix of people in the Saskatchewan population**

Program Strives to Improve Accessibility to

- **Students of Aboriginal Ancestry**
- **Students with Disabilities**
- **Students from Visible Minorities**
- **Female students**

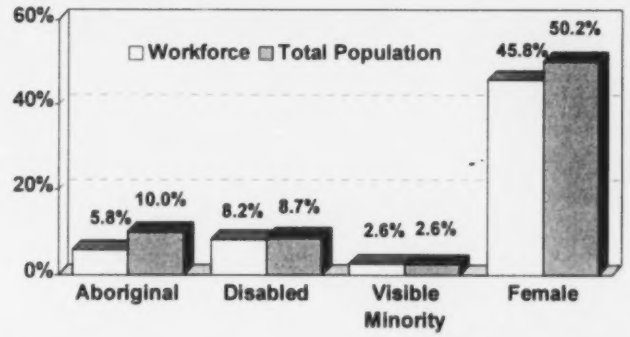
SLIDE 4

SIAST Education Equity Program

- **Voluntary (developed under the special programs section of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code)**
- **Approved by the Board and the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, May 1990**
- **Goal is to achieve a representative student body in SIAST Certificate/Diploma programs with respect to the four designated groups**
- **Defines strategies to address systemic discrimination and identifies special measures to increase the participation and success of designated group students in Certificate and Diploma programs**

SLIDE 5

Representation of Employment Equity Designated Groups in Saskatchewan, 1991



Workforce population for Aboriginal, Visible Minority and Females is comprised of persons aged 15 and over who worked sometime in 1990 or 1991. The workforce population for Disabled persons is comprised of persons aged 15 to 65 who worked sometime between 1986 and 1991.

SLIDE 6

Saskatchewan Working Age Demographics

(SIAST Education Equity Long Term Goals)

- Persons of Aboriginal Ancestry - 12.2%
- People with Disabilities - 9.7%
- Visible Minority People
  - Saskatoon - 4.7%
  - Regina - 5.1%
  - Saskatchewan - 2.6%
- Females - 50%

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SLIDE 7

Direct Student Access Fund

Activities

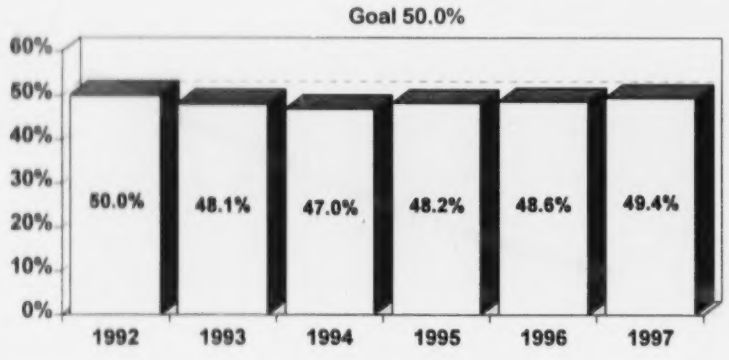
- Learning Strategy Development
- Subject Specific Tutoring - Individual and Group
- Invigilators
- Readers
- Scribes
- Photocopy Cards
- Orthopedic Chairs
- Adaptive Computer Technology
- Application Fees
- Sign Language Interpreters
- Oral Facilitators

Learning Assistance Centre

Transition Program for LD Adults

SLIDE 8

Enrolment Trend - Female



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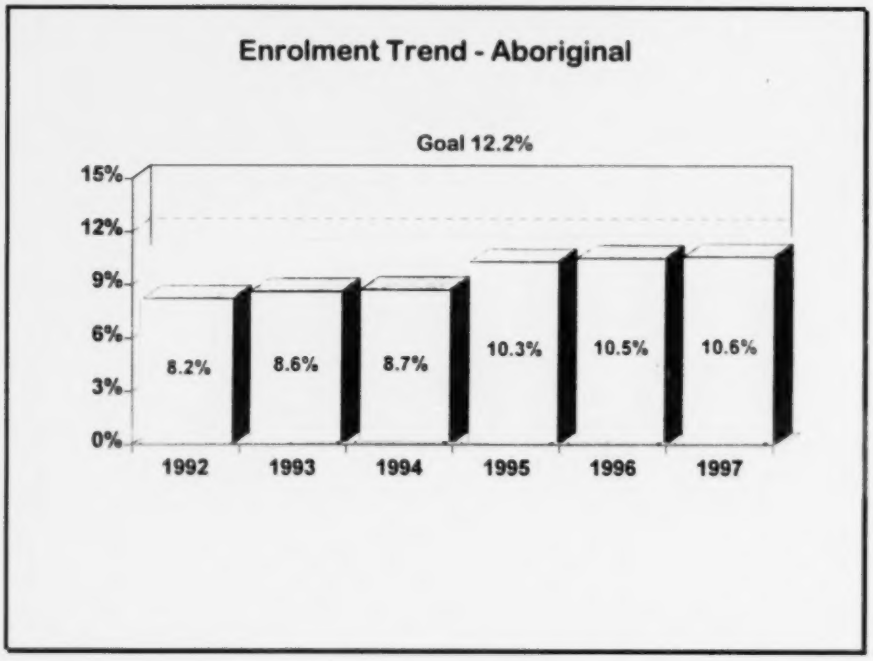

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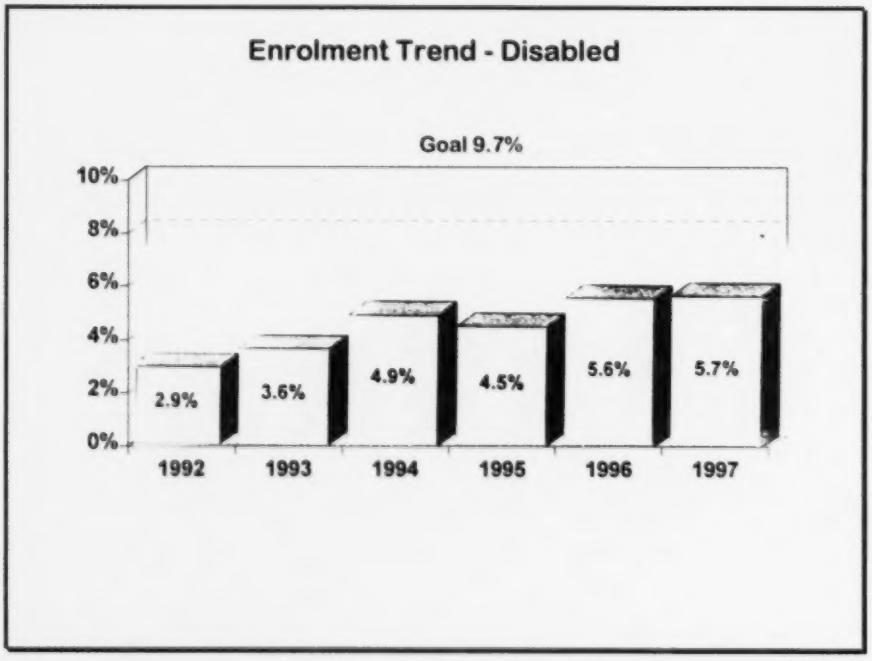

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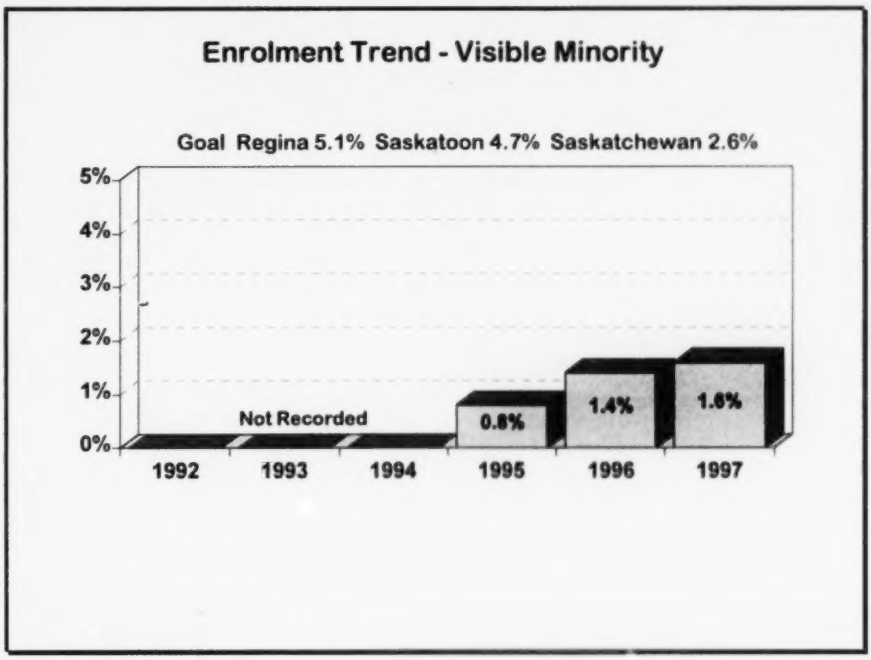

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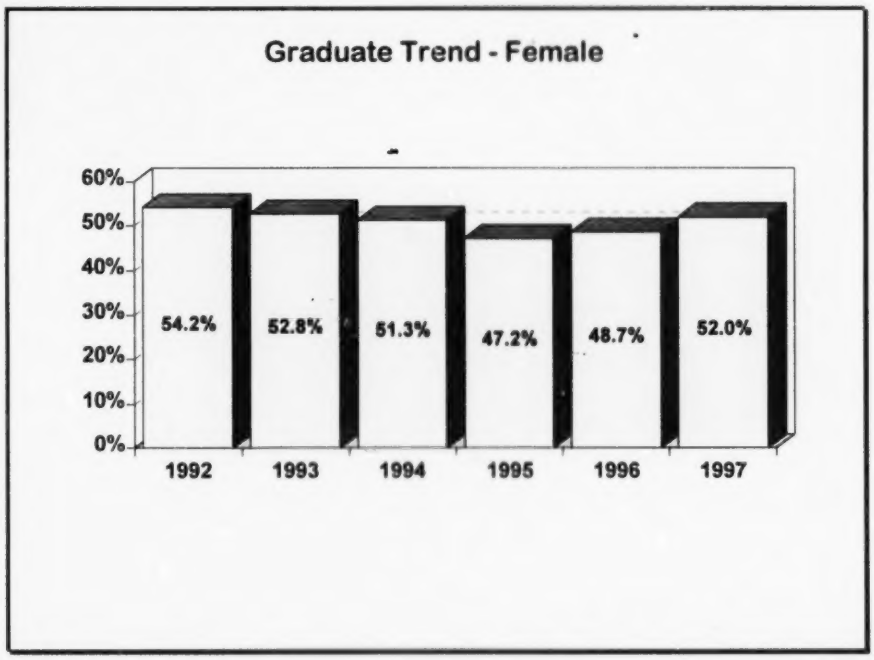

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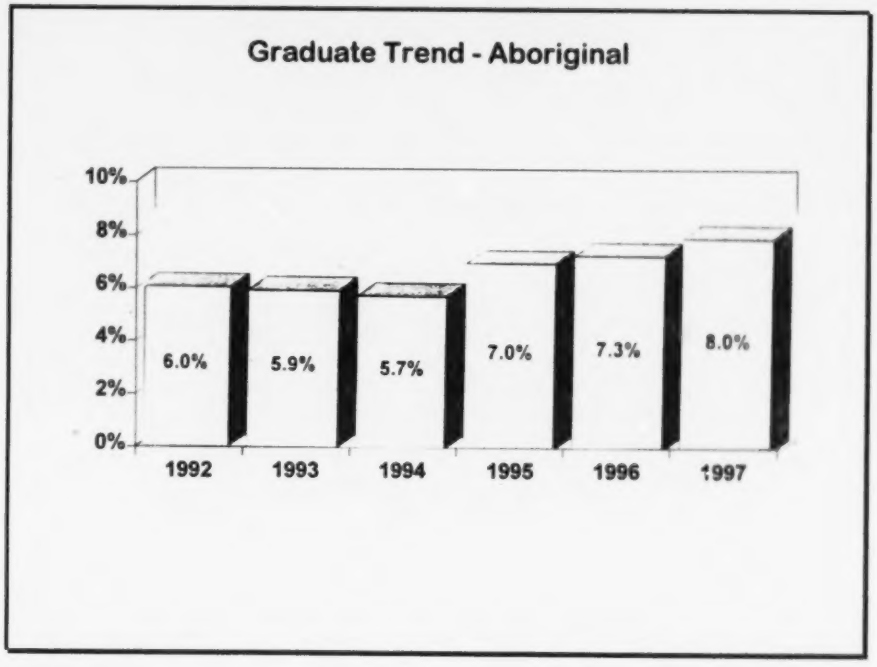

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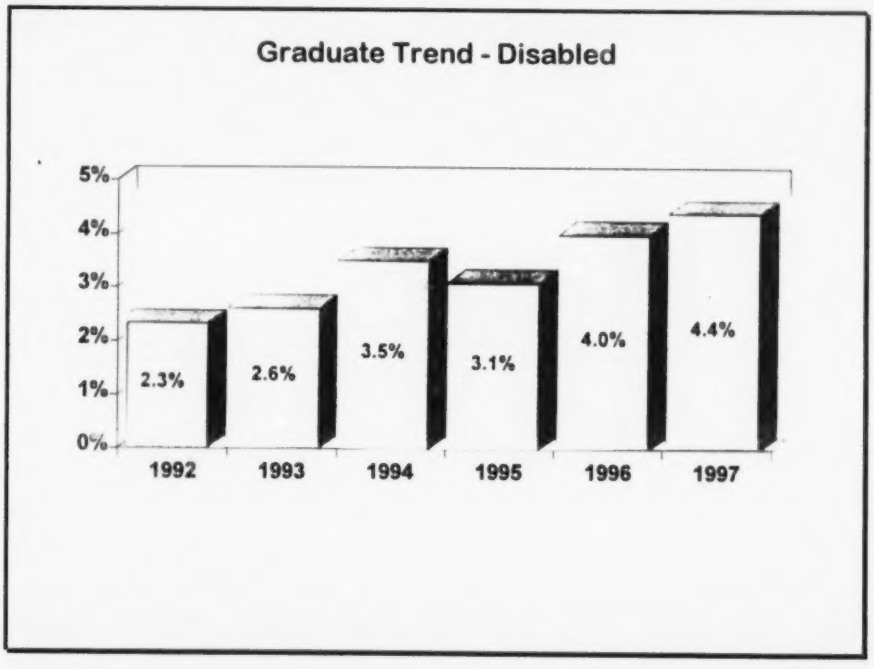

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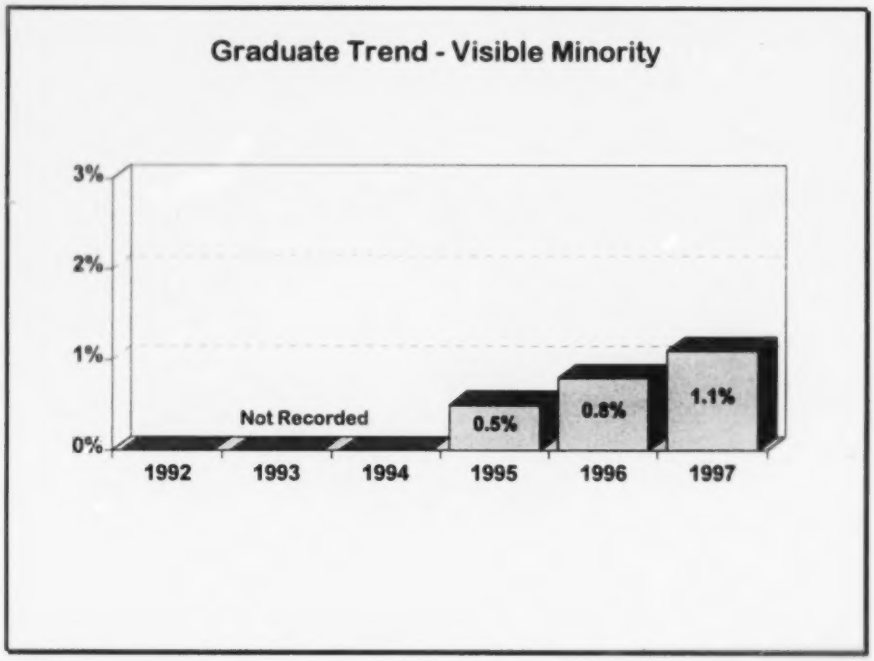

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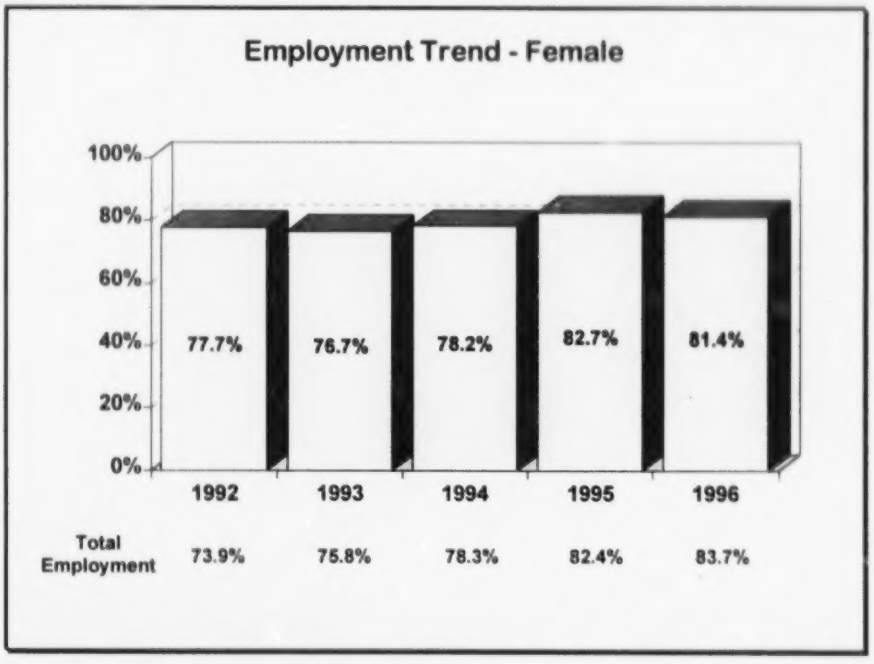

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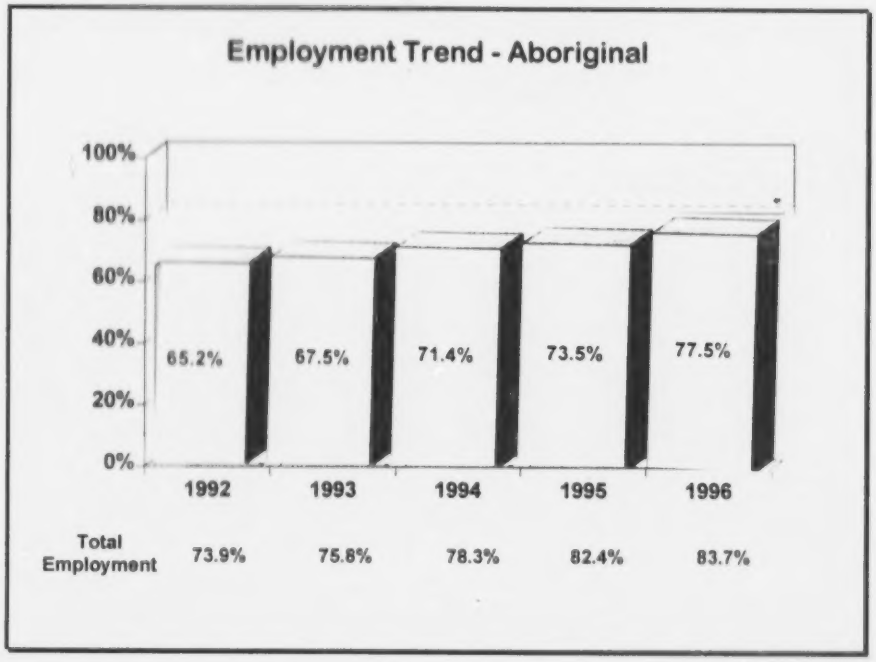

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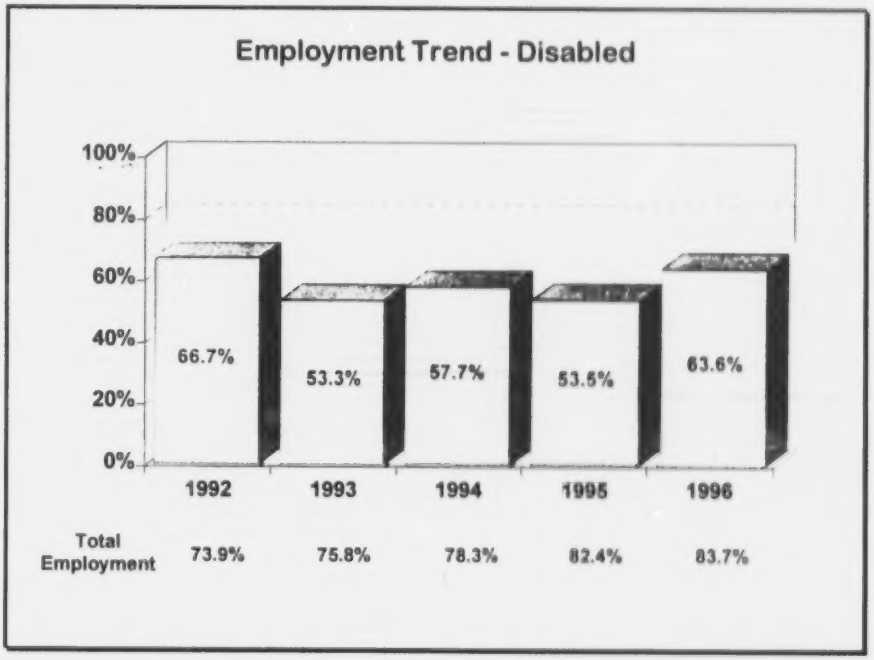

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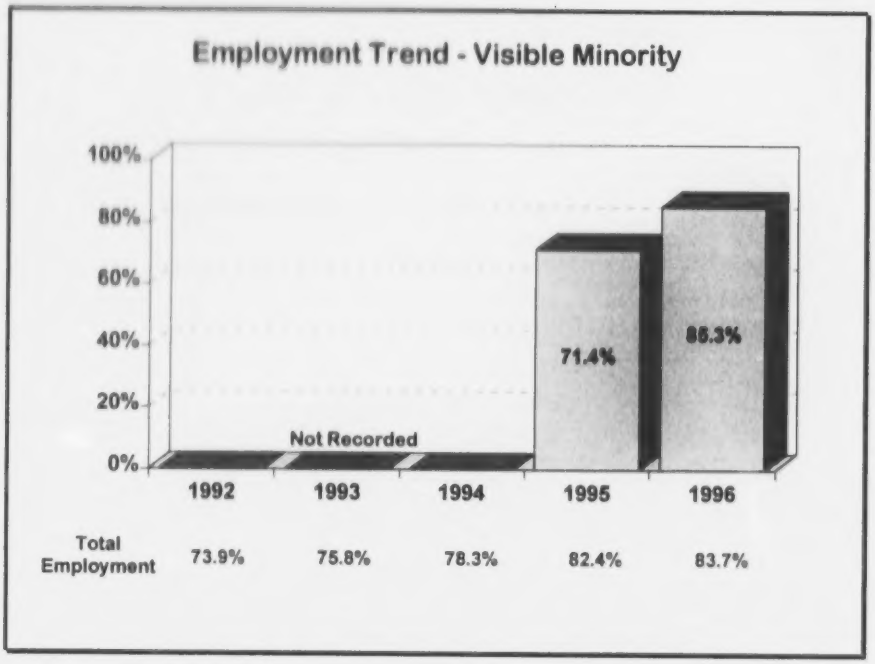

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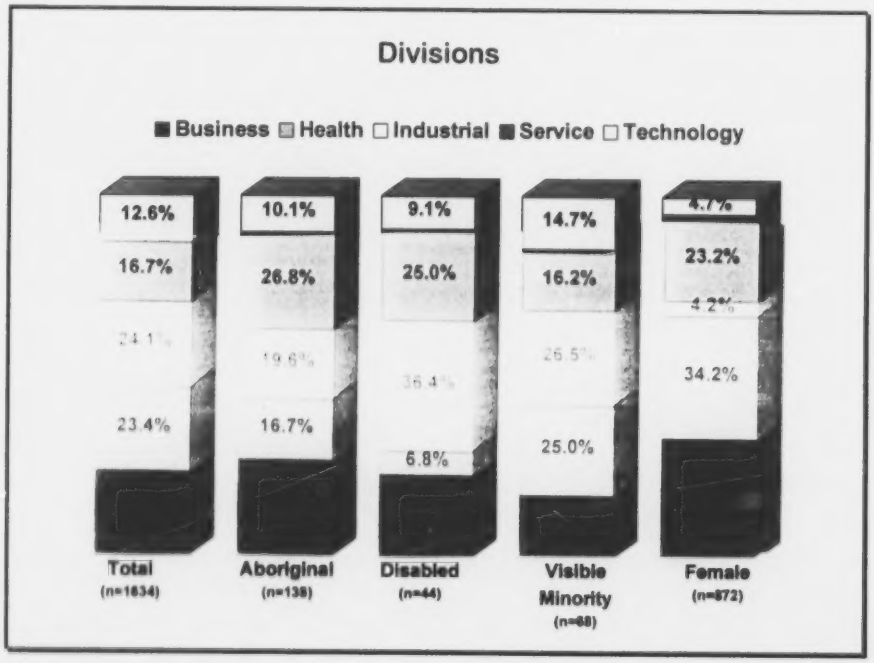

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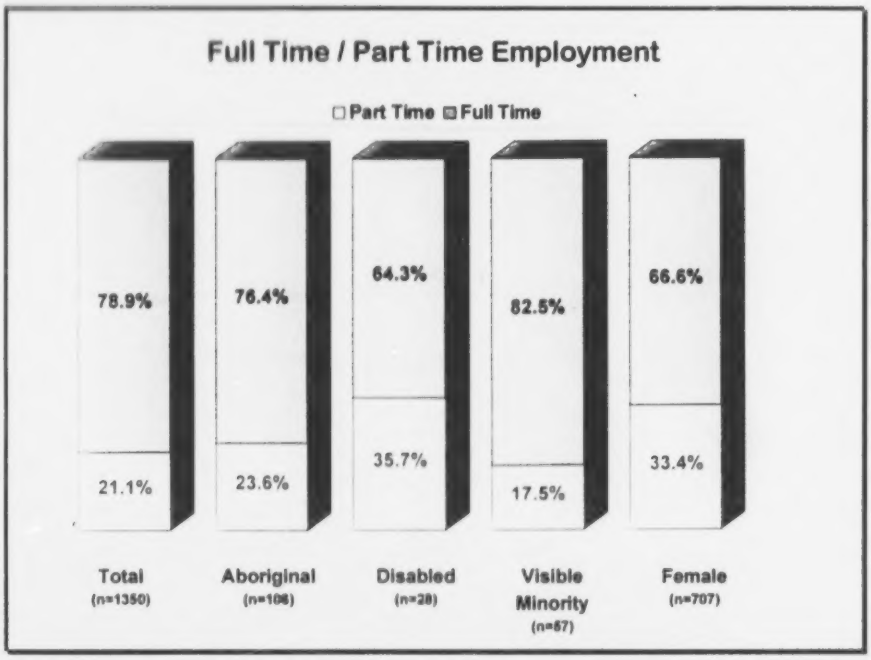

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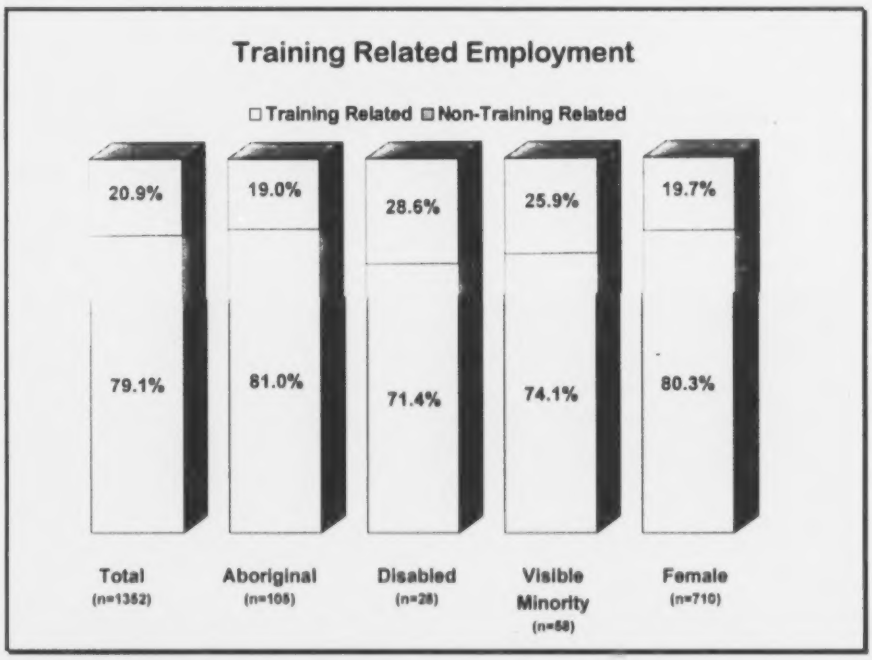

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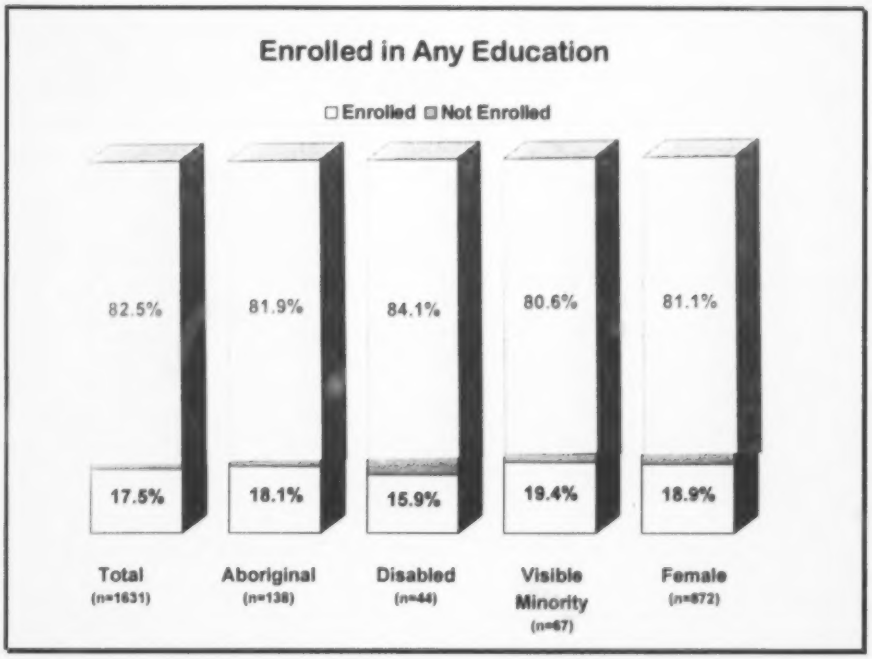

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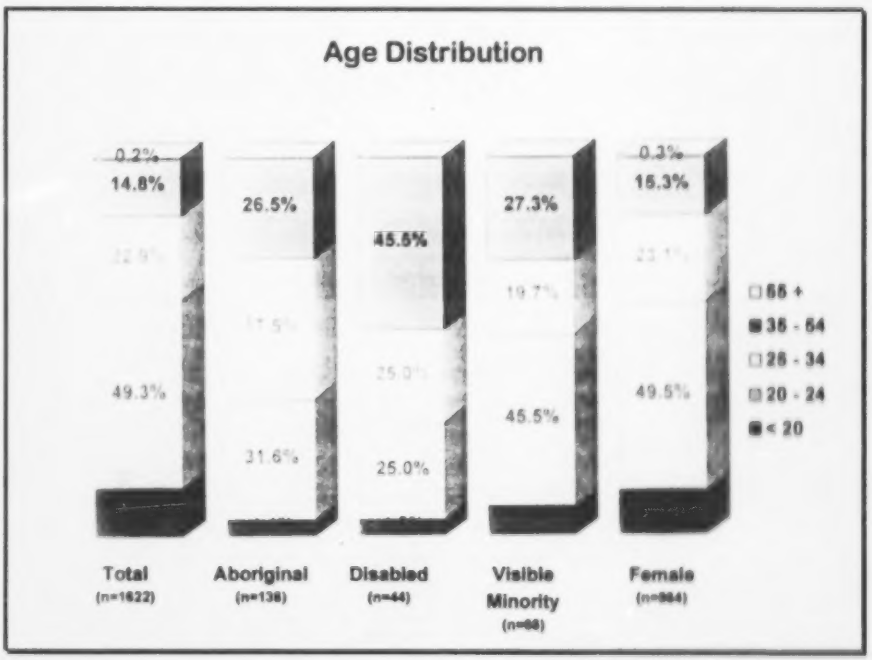

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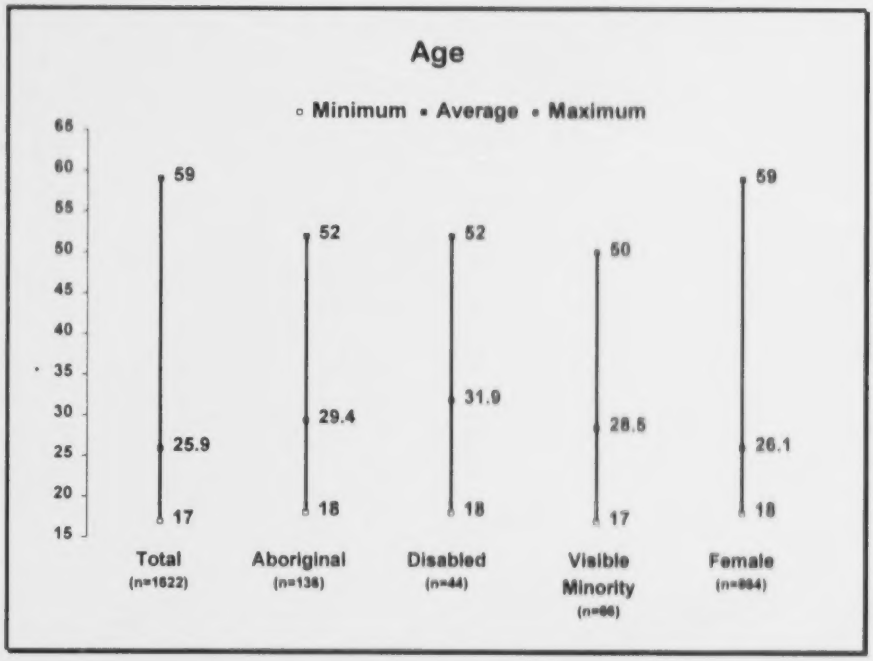

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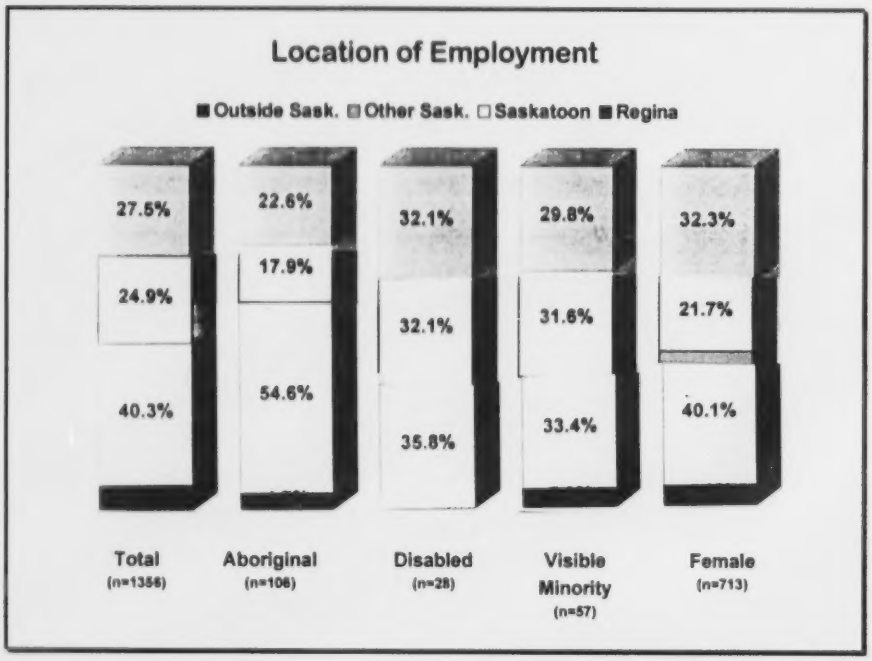

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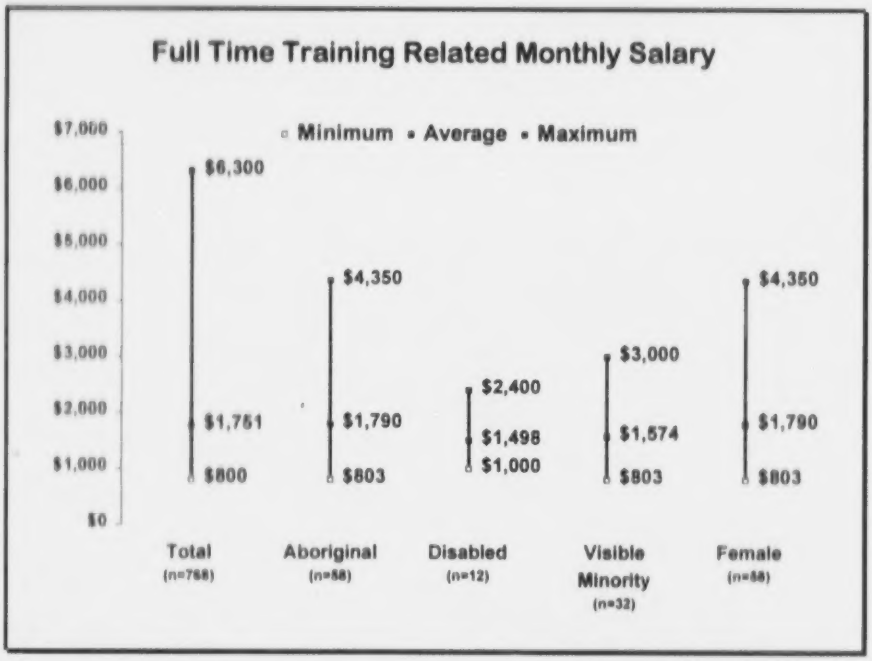

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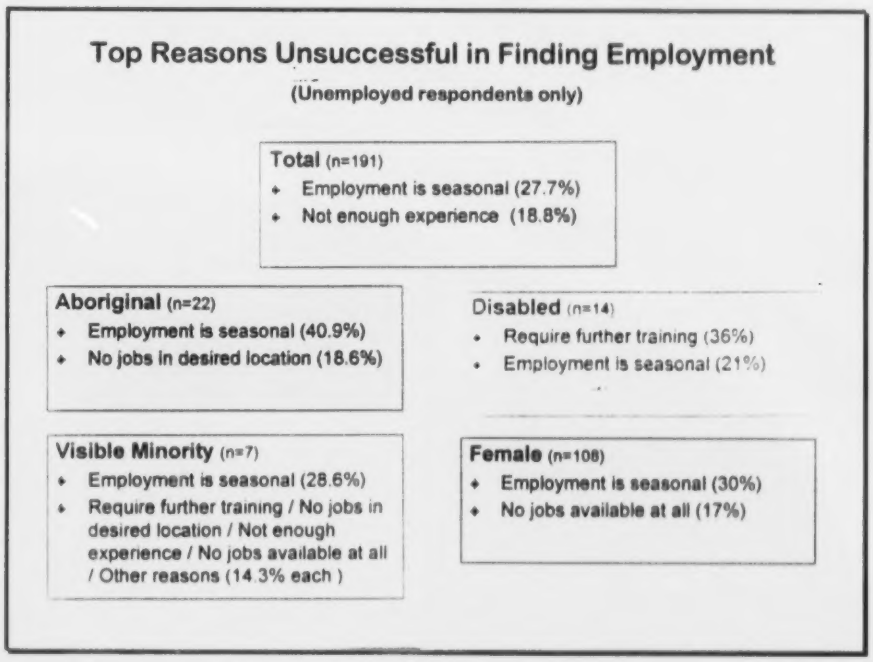
Top Reasons Unsuccessful in Finding Employment
(Unemployed respondents only)
Total (n=191)
• Employment is seasonal (27.7%)
• Not enough experience (18.8%)
Aboriginal (n=22)
• Employment is seasonal (40.9%)
• No jobs in desired location (18.6%)
Disabled (n=14)
• Require further training (36%)
• Employment is seasonal (21%)
Visible Minority (n=7)
• Employment is seasonal (28.6%)
• Require further training / No jobs in desired location / Not enough experience / No jobs available at all / Other reasons (14.3% each)
Female (n=108)
• Employment is seasonal (30%)
• No jobs available at all (17%)

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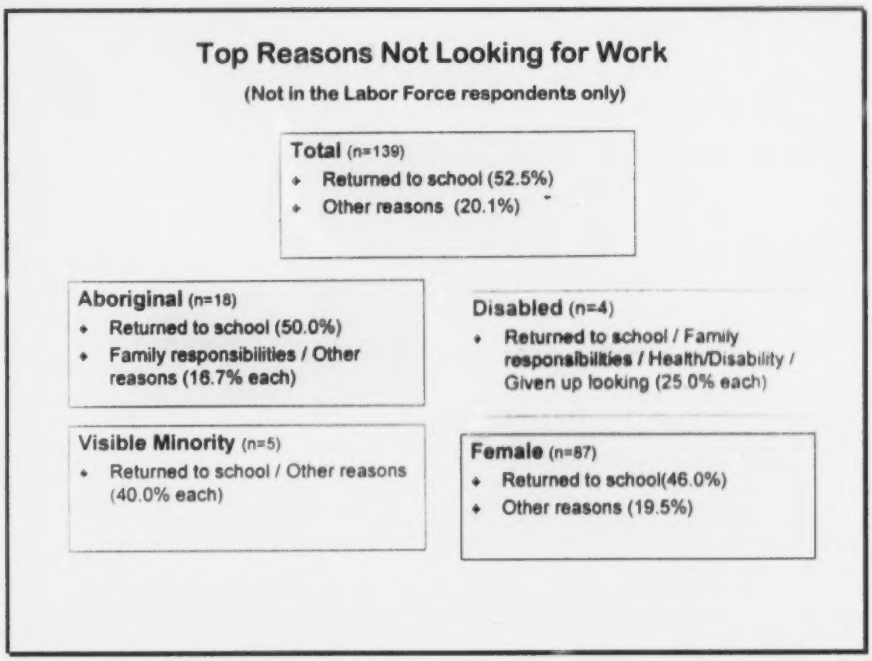
SLIDE 29


Top Reasons Not Looking for Work
(Not in the Labor Force respondents only)
Total (n=139)
Returned to school (52.5%)
Other reasons (20.1%)
Aboriginal (n=18)
Returned to school (50.0%)
Family responsibilities / Other reasons (16.7% each)
Disabled (n=4)
Returned to school / Family responsibilities / Health/Disability / Given up looking (25.0% each)
Visible Minority (n=5)
Returned to school / Other reasons (40.0% each)
Female (n=87)
Returned to school(46.0%)
Other reasons (19.5%)

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